

Type A Type B

Seasonal Influenza

July 24, 2009

Throughout the year, there may be scattered cases of seasonal influenza, types A and B, although they are predominantly in the winter months, November through February. Each year, the frequency and severity varies.

Symptoms include fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, congestion and general aches and pains. The contagious period may extend from one day before symptoms start through the 7<sup>th</sup> day of illness. The diagnosis can be made based on the signs and symptoms plus a test of nasal mucus.

Treatment is aimed at helping symptoms since there is no specific cure. Fever treatment with acetaminophen or ibuprofen (not aspirin) and usual cough and congestion medicines may help. If you need to seek medical care, antiviral medication may be prescribed, although some strains of A and B become resistant to these therapies.

Staying home to minimize spread of illness is advised. Cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve at the elbow during coughs and sneezes. Discard tissues immediately when used. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, and when not available, use an alcohol based hand sanitizer.

See our flu pamphlet for additional suggestions,  
[http://www.jmu.edu/healthctr/CHI/wm\\_library/fluinfo2009.pdf](http://www.jmu.edu/healthctr/CHI/wm_library/fluinfo2009.pdf) and  
the CDC website, <http://cdc.gov/flu/>